



Dig It! 2015 is a year-long celebration of Scottish Archaeology, coordinated by the Society of Antiquaries and Archaeology Scotland. For events, news and opportunities to join in sign up for the Dig It! 2015 newsletter at DigIt2015.com

Field Activity Updates

Saline Old Grave Yard

The second interim report on the Society's investigations at Saline Old Grave Yard has now been published. It covers our work there on the 18th and 19th April 2015.

The first interim report covered the work undertaken in 2013.

The April 2015 work scope comprised three elements:

1. A partial repeat of 2013's ground resistance geophysical survey, on this occasion only covering two 20 x 20 metre squares within the graveyard.
2. A dumpy level transect to give a vertical profile along the W-E centre-line of the geophysical survey plot, which also approximates to the centre-line of the graveyard, and another roughly N-S along the base of the east wall of the graveyard.
3. The excavation of two small, shallow trenches in the south-east corner of the graveyard to help explain the geophysical variations and topographical features in that area and to locate potential wall remains.



The second interim report, in full, can be sent to you upon request to Ian Hawkins

Mumrills Field Walking

Geoff Bailey reports on the glorious day they had field walking at Mumrills back on Saturday 21 March. The farmer has used a new plough, which did not seem to go as deep as previous ones, or to furrow the soil. Combined with the dry spell this made spotting pottery difficult. Some samian, and two sherds of mortaria – but mostly flue tiles were found

However, it was an excellent day for detecting as the following finds show:

1. Coin. Silver denarius of Hadrian (134-138 AD). Obverse – bust facing right: "HADRIANVS AVG COS III PP. Reverse – Italia standing facing left holding a sceptre in her right hand and a cornucopia in the right: "ITALIA". 18mm dia, 180 degrees, fine.

2. Coin. Silver denarius of Domitian (91-96 AD). Obverse – bust facing right: “--- ----- GERM PM –PXI”. Reverse – Minerva advancing right brandishing a javelin with a round shield on her left hand: “IMP --- ---- CENS PPP”. 17mm dia, 180 degrees, slightly worn.

3. Coin. Copper alloy dupondius of Antoninus Pius (153-154 AD). Obverse – bust facing right. Reverse – Libertas standing facing right holding a pileus in her right hand, with right arm extended: “---- ----/ SC”. 26mm dia, 200 degrees, fair. This coin is often associated with the emperor’s activities in Britain.

4. Cast copper alloy harness pendant (1200-1400 AD). Circular pendant with offset perforated loop. The back is smooth and slightly concave. The front is decorated with a raised shield bearing three sunk chevrons containing red (gules) enamel. Pendant 16mm dia, overall length 23mm, similar to a pendant recently found at Chiseldon near Swindon. These pendants are usually shield-shaped containing heraldic devices such as lions, eagles and chevrons. (see photo below)



2. Denarius of Domitian



3. Copper Alloy Harness Pendant

5. Cast copper alloy loop attached to a flat plate. Probably a loop on the back of a Roman harness fitting. L23mm, h.9mm, loop dia. 4mm.

Summer Dig at Clyde Cottage

Geoff Bailey has advised that this year will see a return to dig at Clyde Cottage, thanks to the generosity of the owners. The owners have also given permission to dig up part of the lawn to look for the ditch on the other side of the Roman road. Another deep trench next to the previous one may be possible in order to get a complete profile – and to recover more finds. The great thing about butt end of ditches next to roads is that they were used to dispose of rubbish!

The dig is at the usual time of year- last week in July/ first week in August. Start date Saturday 25th. If you are interested in taking part please contact Geoff at Falkirk Community Trust: 01324 503783. Email: geoff.bailey@falkirkcommunitytrust.org

The site is at the very end of Pleasance Gardens. There is no parking in the immediate vicinity, but it is possible to park in streets to the south – Learmonth St, Neilson St, etc. And it is very close to the public toilets in the Howgate Shopping Centre!

Other Activities

Brunstane Castle

We had hoped to make a start on survey and excavation this spring but we have not had any response from Penicuik Estate about clearance of the large fallen tree at the site.

Castle Excavations

There are proposed excavations at Bothwell and Tantallon castles this year with Historic Scotland and Kirkdale Archaeology

Newhailes

Dan Rhodes asking if any EAFS members would be interested in digging at Newhailes. Someone from CFA is running the dig every Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday from now until September. Starting at 9.30 in the flower garden next to the big house. Other things can be negotiated with the archaeologist. No need to book – just go on whatever day or days suit.

<http://canmore.rcahms.gov.uk/en/site/171084/details/newhailes+flower+garden/>

Dreghorn WW1 Practice Trenches

Two archaeological weekends will be taking place at the site of the Dreghorn WW1 practice trenches, on behalf of Miller Homes and the CEC on 20th and 21st and 27th and 28th June, between 10 and 5 all days.

Participants will have the opportunity to do some survey and take part in the excavations, as well as attending workshops on a range of subjects including artefacts and site conservation. Once again, participation is completely free and open to all. Booking is necessary

Please get in touch with Martin Cook at AOC Archaeology

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Archaeology Scotland Summer School

From 15th to 18th May some members of the Society attended the Archaeology Scotland Summer School based at the Loch Fyne Hotel, Inveraray, and spent two days visiting a variety of sites from the Mesolithic to deserted townships of the 19th century.

The excursions were followed in the evenings by a series of lectures given by Dr Alison Sheridan, Principal Curator, Early Prehistory, National Museums Scotland (*Contextualising Kilmartin: recent research and fieldwork in the Kilmartin valley*), Dr David Caldwell, President of the Society of Antiquaries of Scotland, former Keeper of Scottish History and Archaeology, National Museums Scotland (*Recent multi-disciplinary research on West Highland medieval sculpture*), Dr Heather James, Northlight Heritage (*Medieval rural settlement in Mid-Argyll*), Roderick Regan, Kilmartin Museum (*Recent fieldwork and excavations undertaken by the Kilmartin Museum*) and Eve Boyle, RCAHMS (*An overview of the Summer School weekend, place and people*).

On Monday morning the weekend finished with a guided walk round Inveraray led by Murdo MacDonald, former archivist for Argyll and Bute Council.

There was a very good attendance at the field school which was most enjoyable and informative. Our thanks to the speakers, excursion leaders and Geoff Waters (Archaeology Scotland's Summer School Director) and Alison Reid (Blue Badge Guide, Scotland), who put so much effort into the planning, production of the field excursion guide book and organisation for and during the weekend.

Other Publications, Events & Exhibitions

The Abbey of St Mary, Haddington

An extensive paper on “A Considerable Monastery Now So Entirely Demolished’: Rediscovering the Abbey of St Mary, Haddington” by Eric H Glendinning, Jean McKinnon and Judith Baldry has now been published in the Transactions of the East Lothian Antiquarian and Field Naturalists Society, Vol XXX 2015.

EAFS undertook the resistance survey which supported the archival research by members of Haddington’s History Society in this publication. Copies are available on request from Ian Hawkins.

Excavations at Woodside House on the line of the Antonine Wall and at Arnothill House, Arnothill, Falkirk, 2015

The reports by Falkirk Community Trust on these excavations have now been published and you can obtain a copy on request, again to Ian Hawkins.

Scottish Churches Trust Newsletter, April 2015

A copy has been received from Nick Davis. A pdf copy can be emailed if required

Scottish Rock Art Project

EAFS member Dr Tertia Barnett is involved in putting together a new project working with local communities to record and research prehistoric rock art in Scotland, and would very much like to hear your thoughts on this. They are consulting local people across Scotland to find out whether you might be interested in being involved in the project, and the sort of things you might like to do. You may already be working on a rock art-related project, in which case we would like to hear about your work. If you think you might be interested in participating, or would like to tell us about your own project, we would be very grateful if you could read the information below, and then complete our short questionnaire using this link: <https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/9M3M2RF>. Your answers will be invaluable in helping us develop the project.

The project will be hosted by Historic Environment Scotland (HES) in partnership with the Glasgow School of Art Digital Design Studio, Edinburgh University School of History, Classics and Archaeology, and Archaeology Scotland. The project will depend on funding from the Arts and Humanities Research Council (AHRC). If our funding application is successful, the project should start in late 2016.

Other Links

Archaeology Scotland’s “Out and About” list of events can be accessed at www.archaeologyscotland.org.uk

SCRAN

This database has nearly 400,000 images. It can be used with a library card free. Go to libraries.scran.ac.uk and log in using your library card number.

Next Newsletter

The next Newsletter will be issued at the end of July 2015. All Contributions welcomed.

Until then, enjoy your archaeology!

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(Opinions expressed in this Newsletter are not necessarily those of the Society, its Committee and Members, or the Editor).